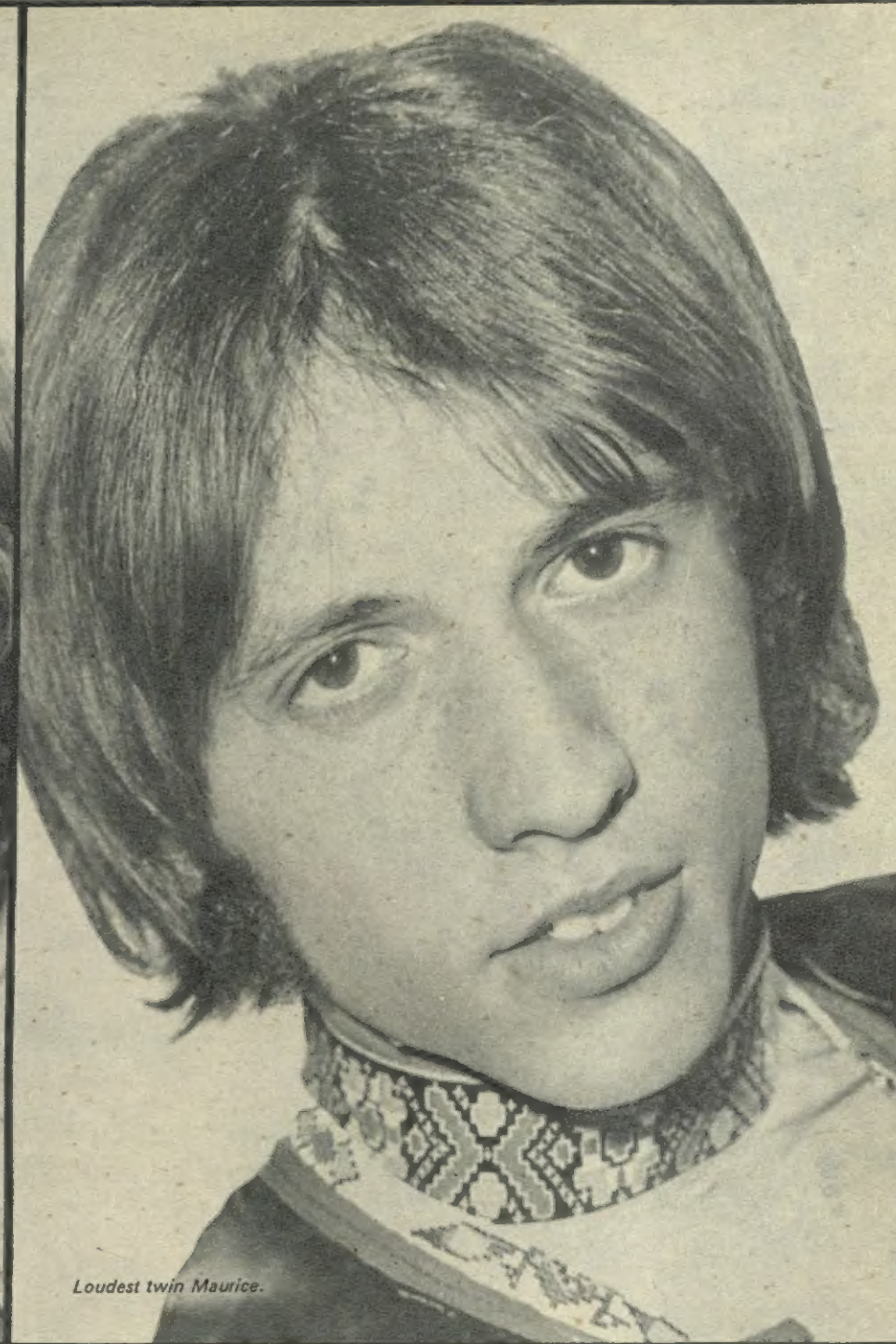




They are romantic and there is an uncanny musical telepathy between them. Of course they have the odd flare-up and voices are raised... but it's soon over and they return to being their kind, softly spoken and quietly well mannered selves. Like most brothers, they borrow each other's gear. Yet, despite their unity, they are all very different.



Words on Bee Gee bros.



There are few families who can boast the "togetherness" of the Family Gibb. And there is certainly a great affinity between the three famous sons of that family—twins Robin and Maurice, and the elder brother Barry.

They have a genuine concern for each other and far more respect than the average friend or relative. Each will instantly stand up for the other. Everything is shared—split three ways.

An important cog in the family wheel is their father and road manager-cum-chauffeur, Hughie. He has zealously

guarded and guided his three talented sons from the day they set foot on the stage of the Manchester Gaumont at the tender ages of six and eight right up to the present day where, apart from driving them to engagements, he will willingly act as errand boy to ensure a smooth and unworried performance from them.

Blonde Mrs. Gibb, like all good mums, still worries about whether her brood are feeding themselves properly now that they have left the family residence. Also there is a "swinging" grandmother (Maurice's own word) who recently came all the way from Australia to see for herself how the newly found

fame was affecting them. I am sure she was delighted to find that they hadn't changed a bit.

Barry, Maurice and Robin all have extensive wardrobes. They take a pride in their clothes which are always newly cleaned and freshly pressed. Frequently they swap their clothes around.

If a last-minute television booking has been made and they can't all get home to collect fresh clothes I've known Barry dig into his wardrobe and lend Maurice and Robin shirts and jackets—possibly not getting them back until the next time when he's the one stuck for something to wear!

I once admired a jacket

covered with animals that Maurice was wearing.

"Actually it's not mine," he shrugged. "It belongs to Robin but he decided it's a bit too brilliant for him—so I wear it instead."

Hughie and the three boys have determinedly stuck together during their early show business career in Australia. Hughie was sure they would succeed in the end and of course they did. Barry, Robin and Maurice had automatically taken to singing three-part harmonies together in their early Manchester years without really thinking about it. They developed a fantastic kind of musical telepathy which continually crops up in their present-day composing.

Barry and Robin can suddenly turn to each other and find they are singing the same melody—the start of yet another of their marvellous songs. They will rush off to find Maurice and chords and lyrics just fall into place without the three of them having to discuss the matter. They are so completely on the same wavelength.

Of course there are the odd flare-ups but that's only to be expected with artistic, creative people. But there is no animosity. Voices are raised, the problem gets solved and within minutes all is forgotten and forgiven. They are romantics. They are

kind, softly spoken and well mannered in an unobtrusive kind of way. Yet, despite their unity, their closeness, they have distinctly separate characters. Barry has a quiet authority accepted by his younger brothers and he tends to take on the business affairs of the group.

Surprisingly enough the twins are complete opposites. Robin is quiet. He likes to relax. He likes warm polo neck sweaters because he finds the British winters very chilly. He's a homebody who is happy sitting watching the tele.

He will sit apparently gazing into space while Barry and Maurice work out an arrangement or stage act over his head.

Suddenly Robin will cut in with a pertinent remark or suggestion which will instantly be accepted by Maurice and Barry. Then Robin will sink back into his chair seemingly unaware of the rest of the conversation but in fact taking in every word.

Maurice admits to being a bit of a raver. He's always full of bounce and never sits still for very long. He likes parties. He likes going out at night to sit chatting in clubs into the small hours. His clothes are somewhat brighter than his twin's and it was Maurice who treated himself to a snazzy bright blue mini with blacked-out windows and fitted with stereo.

The three of them have in-

vested in a lovely old Rolls-Royce car, which last time I heard was being painted white. They are intrigued by seances and they share a marvellous sense of fun.

I sat one evening listening to a tape they had made in the early hours of one morning. It sounded like Robin Hood and his Merrie Men gone mad! The script was made up as they went along. Voices, noises and music were all provided by Barry, Robin or Maurice. A sort of medieval Goon Show and very, very funny.

But then maybe it's because they have learnt to laugh together that they enjoy such close friendship.

LORELY ANDERSON